

SENATE BILL REPORT

HJM 4025

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, February 23, 2010

Brief Description: Honoring Vietnam veterans.

Sponsors: Representatives O'Brien, Campbell, Seaquist, Appleton, McCune, Kelley, Warnick, Armstrong, Sells, Morrell, Maxwell, Van De Wege, Simpson, Conway, Smith, Shea, Pearson, Johnson, Hurst and Kenney.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/12/10, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 2/23/10 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; McDermott, Pridemore and Swecker.

Staff: Sharon Swanson (786-7447)

Background: Thousands of Washington residents served in the Vietnam War and more than 1,100 did not return home. South Vietnamese soldiers fought alongside American soldiers during the war and, as a result, died or spent years imprisoned or persecuted in Vietnam after the war. Sixty thousand Vietnamese-Americans now live in the state and the majority of these are soldiers of the Republic of South Vietnam and their families who fled or immigrated from Vietnam after the war, many under the Orderly Departure Program.

The Vietnam Veterans Committee of Washington has been formed to recognize the contributions of the Republic of South Vietnam soldiers who fought alongside American soldiers and has proposed that a series of three flagpoles be placed at the Washington Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Capitol Campus.

Summary of Bill: The executive branch of Washington and the legislative authorities of each county are urged to promote a statewide effort to encourage Vietnam veterans to work with the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Vietnam Veterans Committee of Washington to plan appropriate opportunities for joint ceremonies and events bringing these two groups of veterans together and fostering a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation, and

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to propose other means of jointly honoring and supporting the Republic of South Vietnam and American veterans of the Vietnam War.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: American and South Vietnamese soldiers fought together, were wounded together, and died together. There are over 60,000 members of the Vietnamese community in our state. This Memorial recognizes the sacrifices of both communities.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative O'Brien, prime sponsor.